



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF ANTIQUE SCALE COLLECTORS

President's Newsletter

Number 69. January, 1996.

A NEW YEAR. A NEW DECADE.

In 1976 ISASC was founded, and in 1996 our Society enters its third decade on an optimistic note of continued growth and member service. At this writing, our North American Chapter membership stands at 345, and worldwide at close to 500. Our officers and directors are busy dealing with matters that have to do with our operational well-being and financial stability, and at this milestone in our history, we want to extend our best wishes to each and everyone of you for the healthiest and happiest of new years.

NEW ORLEANS, HERE WE COME.

By now you should have received the mailing telling you about our New Orleans get-together from May 30 to June 2, and there's not too much more we can say here about the good times awaiting you. The city's fun-loving reputation speaks for itself, the famed Hotel Monteleone's tradition of hospitality is known far and wide, and Creole dining, French Quarter entertainment, historic sightseeing, shops for antiques, and all else that New Orleans offers are included in our plans. Our program chairman, Joe Lenorovitz, has a few innovations up his sleeve, and it just may be that we'll exceed last year's record Hershey turnout. Your part in all this? Simply fill out the reservation form and mail it back to us with your registration fee.

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But do it quickly, to make sure you're included in the specified block of hotel rooms assigned to us. Also, do take advantage of the low hotel rate offered us to extend your stay before and/or after the convention, so that you give yourself plenty of time to enjoy New Orleans' myriad pleasures.

MORE ON CONVENTIONS.

This time about the Euro-Chapter conclave this past October at the famed Avery Scale Works in Birmingham, England. Present from the colonies were yours truly and spouse Margie, Gloria and Ralph Lipfert, Michael Goodman, Maggie Van Frank, Mary Easton, Jerry Katz, and Tom Dooley. The day-long affair was highlighted by a scale bourse in the a.m. and an auction in the p.m. (great occasions for buying and selling), a tour of the Avery Historical Museum, and presentations on "Tiffany Scales" (Bob Stein) and "60 years of Avery" (Bob Holdaway). Dinner the night before and lunch during the day gave us the chance to mingle with our many good friends from England and the Continent, and also to meet other members for the first time. It was a most enjoyable (and illuminating) meeting, and there's no better time than now to advise you that the next Euro-Chapter convention in the UK will be held on Sunday, April 21, in the Roman/Viking city of York, a mere 2-1/4 hours by rail from London. If you're bound for Europe in early Spring, we can't recommend too highly your taking in this event. For more information, write Ron Wilkinson, 28 Foxhill Road, Burton Joyce, Nottingham NG14 5DB, England.

TROEMNER COMES BACK TO OUR LIBRARY.

Almost two years ago, ISASC's Euro-Chapter reprinted three Henry Troemner scale catalogs for sale to its members, and our Chapter, in turn, secured a limited supply of each for sale to our members. Because of Troemner's popularity as a turn-of-the-century scale manufacturer, we sold out all too quickly, so we decided to publish our own set of Troemner catalogs, and that's what we've done. We were able to borrow six catalogs long out of print, determine that four of the six were decidedly different from one another, and have now published all four under one handsome vinyl, gold-stamped cover.

The four-catalog compilation adds up to 266 pages, and sells for a mere \$27.50, shipping included. If you'd like one (and what scale collector in his right mind wouldn't?), take note of the January, 1996 library list enclosed in this mailing, which describes the four in detail on the back page and is accompanied by a handy order card. A WORD OF ADVICE: Because of the earlier sale of the three Troemners, this time we printed a smaller number than usual, so we suggest you place your order now.

JERRY KATZ A SHOO-IN!

You'll recall, of course, last October's Newsletter in which Jerry Katz was nominated as an ISASC vice president, and the accompanying ballot to make his election official. Well, as expected, the member response was close to overwhelming and we received nearly 100 "yea's" (and nary one "nay"). Consequently, Jerry joins our Chapter's officer ranks as of January 1 of this year, is duly listed in EQM, and will continue his on-going activities in behalf of ISASC as well as taking on special convention responsibilities. And in connection with the service he provides of answering the public's several hundred inquiries annually about scales, Jerry suggested that we put into effect a "Research and Reply" service fee of \$5, which would separate the serious inquiry from the frivolous one and give us a source, albeit nominal, of additional revenue. The idea was presented to our officers and directors, who endorsed it 100% and authorized its taking effect as of the beginning of 1996. Another example of progress through participation.

HERE'S A MIND-BOGGLING MEMBER BONANZA!

We're referring, as you'll see for yourself, to the updated EQM Index contained in this mailing covering the years from 1978 through 1988 (pages 1-1200). The original Index, a most valuable research and reference tool put together by Diana Crawforth, pertained only to EQM material through 1983 (pages 1-624). However, Diana, steadfast in her

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commitment of several years ago to bring it up to date, was able to expand it to include five more years, with the likelihood of adding the seven years from 1989 through 1995 by the end of this year. So, even though the Index is ordinarily sold to our membership (and because our two chapters presently enjoy a state of solvency), it was decided that as an interim step until the completely current version is done, the 1978-1988 edition should be given free to all members. Your copy is enclosed, and should prove to be an extremely beneficial reference tool when seeking information about anything metrological. And while it's uppermost in our mind, we want to thank Diana Crawford for a highly-professional and important service to our Society.

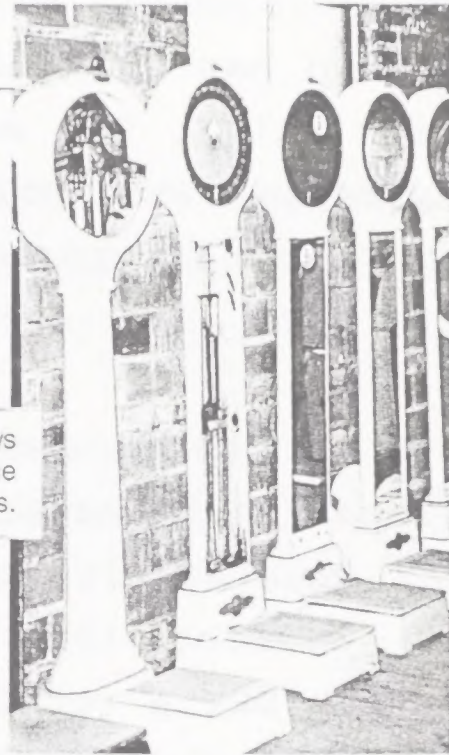
MEMBERS MAKING NEWS.

- ** In the November 15, 1995, issue of the Los Angeles Independent, a feature-length article appeared about member Red Meade and his close to 40 years of scale collecting. The article describes the magnitude and diversity of Red's collection (putting him in the Guinness Book of World Records) and went on to tell about his life as a businessman/hobbyist, family man, community leader, and all-around exemplary citizen. Congratulations, Red, for being who you are. (Shortage of space precludes our running the entire article, but if you'd like a copy, just send me a postcard.)
- ** Member Irv Isicoff of Miami collects scales, but that's not all. He also collects antique safes (the kind that hold money), and having acquired almost 150 of them, he's recently founded the International Safe Museum of Ocala (Florida), where the entire collection reposes in a 3,500 square foot warehouse. It seems that the museum is the only one of its kind, and to acknowledge Irv's pioneering effort, the August, 1995, issue of Safe & Vault Technology devoted a cover and four-page feature story to Irv, his safe collection, and his museum -- titled, "Isicoff's Museum and the Industry," and sub-titled, "Isicoff picks up the baton of the Safe Museum movement." As the article relates, in a matter of time the museum stands a good chance of being sanctioned by the safe industry as "official," and when that day comes, Isicoff's name is sure to be forever linked to this epoch-making event.

** In the January/February, 1996, issue of Reminisce magazine, an article with full color photos appeared about member Bill Berning and his collection of more than 700 coin-operated scales. Kudos deservedly goes to Bill, and because of the article's concise format, we're reprinting it below.



WEIGHT WATCHER Bill Berning shows off one of the penny scales that once weighed folks and told their fortunes.



Collector Can't Scale Back His Weighty Hobby

DON'T TRY to lie about your weight when you visit Bill Berning. He has over 700 coin-operated scales to keep you honest!

It all started about 10 years ago when Bill, of Sycamore, Illinois, was hunting for a hobby. He bought some old jukeboxes, pinball and slot machines, along with an old penny scale.

Soon Bill discovered he

could buy several scales for the price of one old slot machine. Since then, he's also found out some interesting information about the old scales.

Such scales once stood outside stores, restaurants, bus stations and train depots, Bill relates. For a penny (and later a nickel or a dime), you were told your weight and received a fortune.

"Usually the owner of the scale split the income with the business where the scale was located," Bill explains. In fact, the coins were weighed on another

type of scale that calculated their dollar value.

Scale owners were not above using a little ingenuity to increase their pile of pennies, Bill uncovered in his research.

"One trick was to place two scales side by side," he says. "The urge to try both scales was usually too much to resist."

Now Bill's collection includes some beautiful cast-iron scales of the late

19th century. He specializes in Watling scales and was able to acquire that company's records, which tell when a scale was made, who owned it and where it was placed.

Although he's a little too young to have plugged coins into the kind of scales he collects, Bill has talked to relatives who did.

"They recall feeding pennies into a scale in the waiting room of the train depot in their small town," Bill says. "During the Depression, a small card containing a positive message would drop from a slot. Often it said that better times were coming."

Those times have arrived for Bill, whose collection of scales has grown into a full-time business dealing in old weight machines.

When it comes to having knowledge about those fine scales, Bill is happy to be a heavyweight! ☎

MARKETPLACE (SOME SPECIAL OFFERS).

FOR SALE.

Member Lynn Harding, who is a bookseller as well as scale collector, is offering to ISASC members an opportunity to buy at a special price a hardcover copy of the Directory of British Scientific Instrument Makers 1550-1851 (including 800 scale-makers). Enclosed you'll find a flyer fully describing the offer.

FOR SALE.

Member Irving Olson has a superb collection of coin scales which he's offering for sale. The enclosed flyer describes a sampling (8) of the many scales available for purchase. If you'd like to know more, contact Irv at the address/phone shown.

FOR SALE.

Member George Mallis tells us that a Massachusetts coin dealer has made exact replicas in brass of the counterweight for the popular McNally-Harrison counterfeit coin detector. If you have such a scale and it's missing the original counterweight (a common condition), you can buy a replica for \$20, including handling and shipping, from James Kulha, P.O. Box 917, East Longmeadow, MA 01028-0917; telephone 413/525-0205.

FOR SALE.

Member Shirley Mohr brings to our attention the Sixth Edition of the J. Peterman Company catalog ("Booty, Sports & Plunder"), in which, on its cover and p. 16, are illustrated originals of English-made, brass-faced Salter spring balances from 7" to 11" long ("no two are alike"). Each sells for \$70 plus shipping, and the item number is 06A2729. Credit cards are accepted. For a copy of the catalog, to order one or more scales, or to find out what's available, call the company toll-free at 1-800/231-7341.

BIBLIOGRAPHY BYTES.

From time to time, a member wise enough to have bought our new ISASC Bibliography writes us about one or several listed publications. In every case, they're seeking information, and we're happy to pass on their request to the membership at large. However, we hasten to add that much of what's in the bibliography is not owned by members but, on the other hand, much is. Here's the most recent request:

Member Norm Rackison (see directory) is looking for the following --

Illustrated Price List by Herman Kohlbusch, New York, 1902;
Balances and Weights of Precision Mfd by Herman Kohlbusch;
 Herman Kohlbusch, Sr., Jersey City, NJ, 1925.

If you have one of both of these publications and are willing to lend them or make photocopy excerpts, please contact the member direct. Thank you.

ISASC TO CELEBRATE ITS 25TH IN 2001.

As ISASC's history relates, we were founded in 1976 and somehow survived our first year; in 1981 we happily reached our fifth year; and in 1986, we celebrated our first decade with a 10th Anniversary issue of EQM, the highlight of which was a special full-color section depicting a number of noteworthy scales and weights. Now, as we enter 1996, I believe we can say that ISASC has come of age, impressively so. If we were to celebrate our 20th anniversary, it would be during this year, but our thinking is that a more appropriate milestone to celebrate should be our 25th anniversary. That point of view having been endorsed by both ISASC chapters, we want you to know that as we mark with pride our 20 years of the "good life," as societies go, we can look forward to the year 2001 as our upcoming 25th anniversary and to all of us being part of a gala celebration to commemorate it. (And if you use a five-year calendar, now's the time to earmark 2001.)

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A GOOD FRIEND LOST.

With deep sorrow we report the passing of one of our staunchest long-time members, Leonard Pohutsky of Farmington, Michigan. Len was an active member for many years and, with his spouse Kathleen, regularly came to ISASC conventions. However, ill health slowed him up in recent years, and finally took its toll. He was an avid collector and, more important, a first-rate person. We'll remember him for a long time to come.

A THOUGHTFUL GESTURE.

One of our members (who prefers anonymity) wrote and told us of a foundation established by the company he works for that offers a matching gift program having to do with contributions to educational institutions and other non-profit charitable organizations. Since, according to the IRS, ISASC qualifies as an educational organization, our perceptive member sent us the paperwork necessary for us to apply for a matching gift in his name covering his two most recent dues payments to ISASC totalling \$100. We filled out the paperwork (easy), and in a few short weeks, a \$100 check payable to ISASC reached our desk, for deposit shortly afterwards in our Endowment Fund. Our member suggested that we tell all our members of this windfall, in case any of us come across a similar opportunity. So please keep it in mind, and if you're eligible for a similar matching funds grant, remember that both your dues and any contributions you might make to our Benefactor Program most likely would qualify.

POTPOURRI.

** Last November's much-talked-about auction in New York City is now history, and we can report that many fine scales, mostly coin and postal, were there for the bidding and taking. ISASC members attending in person comprised the two Steins (Bob and Ted), Bill and Arline Jacobson, Larry Press, Winthrop Carner, Eric Soslau, Candy Unruh, Jerry Katz, Lucio Marson, Steve Ginsberg, and Wolfgang and Ingrid Schilde (all the way from Berlin). Bidding on certain items was quite spirited, on others somewhat apathetic, but hardly anyone went home empty-handed. And to those who bid

but most often lost out, the catalog as a consolation prize was a handsome souvenir. Several weeks later, the Prices Realized list was mailed out, undoubtedly giving those with a "What if I'd bid..." mentality more reason for agonizing.

- ** While at the auction, Bill and Arline Jacobson told us about their last summer's vacation out West, during which they visited members (and spouses) Ruth Willard, Bill Doniger, Dale Reed, Jerry Wilson, and Bob Foster. Now there's what we'd call a real scale collector's kind of holiday.
- ** In late December, we received a call from Al Roberts of the Rational Past antique shop in Los Angeles, to tell us about a new and upcoming event called The First West Coast Scientific and Technical Instrument Show. Co-sponsored by Al's shop and The Antique Guild, it will be held Saturday, February 3, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the historic Helms Bakery Building, 3225 Helms Avenue, West Los Angeles. According to Al, scales as well as many other scientific and technical antiques and collectibles will be on display and for sale, and admission is free. Al also offered us a display table to show our literature and recruit members, and Joe Lenorovitz is looking into that offer. In any event, if you're a Californian, you might want to attend. For more information, call Al or Bobbie Roberts at 310/476-6277.
- ** Our 1996 Benefactor Program is well underway, and member contributions are coming in at a steady pace. Our thanks to all those who have already responded, and a request of those who are intending to participate to please let us hear from you soon.
- ** Our treasurer reports that this year, we're again facing the "delinquency" problem; i.e., members who as yet haven't paid their 1996 dues. Please, please, please, mail us your check TODAY and spare us the trouble and time that a collection effort entails.

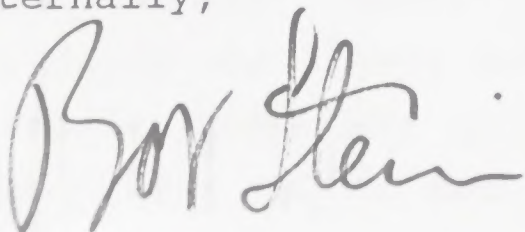
** ISASC's U.S. based directors and N/A Chapter officers are now eight in number, and seven of us will be meeting in Los Angeles on Saturday evening and all-day Sunday, January 27 and 28, to deal with a full agenda of business matters. We'll take minutes, and in April we'll provide our entire Chapter membership with a summary of our meeting and the action steps we deemed worth taking.

AND IN CLOSING...

I want to thank each of our directors and officers for the selfless and supportive services they provided our Society in 1995. They truly are the "salt of the earth," and I easily could devote this entire Newsletter to a recitation of everything they do to make ISASC what it is today. They are: Bill Doniger -- ready to do whatever has to be done whenever it has to be done; Steve Ginsberg -- operates our publications department, a demanding, labor-intensive function; Dale Goldman -- responsible for building our library and acquiring scale catalogs; Jerry Katz -- handling our scales research service to the public, and more; Joe Lenorovitz -- in charge of our convention programming, a time-consuming assignment; Jan Macho -- whose zeal and endurance for handling the tough, tough job of treasurer is unequalled; and Ruth Willard -- whose commitment to the betterment of EQM require countless hours of her time on a task that a lesser person just couldn't handle. In addition, my thanks also to Eric and Judy Soslau for the outstanding job they did in producing ISASC's -- and the world's only -- scale bibliography; and to Diana Crawforth who, season in and season out, prepares and edits the 28 pages of each EQM and who still finds time to work on the Index and other ISASC projects.

I'll be writing you again in April. Meanwhile, make no small plans and do include our New Orleans convention among your big plans for this coming May.

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Roy Stein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.